



Report To The Community

2006





Fall 2006

To library staff, administration, customers and supporters of our public libraries:

Congratulations to the staff and administration of the Montgomery County Public Libraries for this outstanding record of achievement, the first of its kind to be produced by the department.

The past 11 years covered in this report have seen great changes for our libraries – in the way we collect and disseminate information to the public, in the way our buildings are designed and in the needs of our customers – all of which are, in turn, reflections of changes in the community we serve.

As an avid reader and customer of our public libraries since childhood, I have learned the value of libraries and appreciate the many opportunities for learning that they afford everyone who walks through their doors.

I am especially proud of the national recognition our system has earned. It is a reflection of the dedication, creativity and hard work of the staff and the three directors I have had the pleasure to work with – Agnes Griffen, Harriet Henderson and currently, Parker Hamilton.

This Report to the Community will provide all who read it with a picture of a dynamic public library system changing to meet the times, yet never losing sight of the basic need to provide – for all people – access to opportunities that will enrich their lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas M. Duncan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

*Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive*





Fall 2006

I am pleased to present Montgomery County Public Libraries' (MCPL) Report to the Community. It serves as a benchmark for providing free public library services to our community during the last decade.

2006 has been a very busy and challenging year. We have been productive in reaching out and connecting with all segments of our community. The statistics included in this report reflect why our libraries are the preferred places for our residents to find the ideas and information they need to sustain and enrich their lives. Our numbers continue to increase in each and every category: number of registered library card holders; daily visitors; information and questions answered in person, phone or via email, web chat, or by our staff; programs presented and attended by people of all ages and interests; collections and circulation of materials; access to databases, website and online resources; and that's very rewarding.

During the past 10 years of continued growth and expansion, we added new features to our online resources to keep pace with changes and advance in technology. Programs and services were added in different formats to respond to the needs of all our early learners, teenagers, seniors, new Americans, customers with disabilities, government, non-profit organizations and businesses. Renovation and construction of new library facilities peaked. Fairland and Quince Orchard libraries were added to the system, and two new, state-of-the-art buildings replacing the Germantown and Rockville facilities will be opening to the public this fall.

We thank our library customers, elected officials, Library Board members, and Friends of the Library. Their efforts will enable us to carry out our mission to make a positive impact and to improve the quality of life of our residents, as they learn and grow in the areas of interest they choose to pursue.

In the meantime, we will continue to welcome our community to our public libraries, "Where the County Reads," "Where the County Meets" and "Where the County Learns."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Parker Hamilton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B".

*B. Parker Hamilton
Library Director*

Our Mission

Montgomery County Public Libraries offer free and equal access to services and resources to assist the people of Montgomery County, Maryland, in finding ideas and information to sustain and enrich their lives.

History

Public library services in Montgomery County date back to the 19th century when many local libraries were administered by women's clubs. In 1945, a State law encouraged the creation of countywide library systems. This prompted the Montgomery County Council, in 1949, to create an Advisory Committee which recommended a county library system to resolve the discrepancy in services in the upcounty area and to provide equal – or better – facilities and services. In May 1950, the Council created the Department of Public Libraries. The first seven independent libraries to join the system were Silver Spring, Wheaton, Four Corners, Gaithersburg, Garrett Park, Sherwood and Noyes, the oldest surviving library building in the Capital Region, built in 1893.

Where the County gets better library services

Today, Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) continues to fulfill the promise of “better library services,” through the addition of new facilities and careful attention to changing demographics, new technologies and the county's constant growth. Thanks to the professionalism of the staff, circulation figures, materials, visits per capita, reference service and funding levels, MCPL has been ranked in the top 10 library systems nationwide for the past four years, by Hennen's American Public Library Ratings.

MCPL services have also been recognized by the National Association of Counties (NACo). In 2006, three programs were recognized with NACo Achievement Awards for their excellence through the Calendar Year 2005, a multi-department effort to address the library needs of seniors; a robust program of English Language Conversation Clubs that helps new Americans achieve their goals; and an innovative on-line “Reader's Café” which provides outstanding advice on what to read.



Our nationally recognized system now includes 20 full-service branches, a specialized Noyes Library for Young Children, a Health Information Center, a Disability Resources Center and a Correctional Facility Library. More than 700 dedicated library staff proudly serve 525,000 registered library card customers – nearly 60 percent of the county's population. The staff helps promote libraries as places “Where the County Reads,” “Where the County Meets,” “Where the County Learns” and “Where the County gets Mor” (Montgomery Online Resources).

Where the County READS . . . MEETS . . . LEARNS . . . GETS MOR

Where the County Reads

Montgomery is a county of readers. Summer reading and book discussion programs are provided for all ages, as well as access to Internet computers and online reading resources.

- To support customers' needs, MCPL has an extensive collection of 2.9 million books, compact discs, digital video discs, downloadable and audio e-Books, and other materials.
- In 2006, almost \$6 million was spent to purchase approximately 300,000 new books, periodicals, media, and other information resources, and to lease more than 200 online databases.
- In 2006, the annual library materials budget was \$5.4 million, compared to \$3.8 million in 1995.
- In 2006, 11.4 million items were checked out – about 10 items per person in the county.
- Overall, circulation is up 31 percent from 1995, when about 8.8 million items were checked out.



Where the County Meets

Customers meet at libraries for storytimes; children's, teen and adult programs; English Labs and Conversation Clubs; tutorial classes; educational activities; concerts; and cultural events. Library meeting rooms are frequently used by government and community organizations, volunteers and many other non-profit groups.

- During 2006, more than six million visits were made to the libraries in the County system. This represents more than 2,200 people per hour coming through the libraries.
- MCPL facilities are valued at several hundred million dollars. The latest County Capital Improvements Program (CIP) FY05-FY10 provides more than \$100 million for one new library in Clarksburg, and complete building replacements in Germantown, Rockville, and Silver Spring. These libraries will be state-of-the-art facilities that are situated to be cornerstone buildings in their respective town centers. They will be hubs of civic, social, commercial, and cultural activity for decades to come. The CIP also includes major renovations to the Gaithersburg, Wheaton, and Olney libraries, and design funds for renovations at the Davis and Potomac libraries.
- Since 1995, the Fairland and Quince Orchard libraries have been added to the system, and major renovations were completed at Bethesda, Twinbrook and Long Branch libraries.



Where the County READS . . . MEETS . . . LEARNS . . . GETS MOR

Where the County Learns

Libraries are key centers of life-long learning. They support the needs of the “21st Century Learner” by providing information and services in many formats for families, early learners, teenagers, seniors, new Americans, residents with disabilities, government and community groups, non-profit organizations and businesses.

- New Americans use the free resources to learn English language skills and other practical life issues.
- In 2006, more than 820,000 information and reference questions from the general public were answered in person, on the phone or via email/web chat, by our staff.
- During 2006, just over 5,600 programs were presented to more than 172,000 people representing all age groups.
- MCPL partners with Montgomery County Public Schools and the Department of Health and Human Services to support curriculum and early literacy skills.
- Valuable partnerships also exist with the Friends of the Library (FOL) Montgomery County, Maryland, and Branch FOL chapters. Our Friends support book clubs, enhanced materials collections, programs, summer and teen reading campaigns, and volunteer recognitions. The Library Board, Library Advisory Committees and volunteers also provide significant support to these efforts.



Where the County Gets MOR (Montgomery Online Resources)

Our online sources are authoritative, reliable and accurate. The content is frequently checked and updated by experts.

MCPL customers have free 24/7 access to more than 40 databases, including nine national newspapers, thousands of magazines, e-Books, downloadable audio books, online language tutorials and Learn-A-Test tutorials for many standardized tests.

- In 2006, the number of searches conducted in library databases totaled 769,854, an increase of 16.2 percent from 2004.
- In 2006, the 262 Internet workstations were used more than 770,000 times, an average of 14 people every library service hour.
- The MCPL website was unveiled in 1997 and in 2004 was the fourth most popular webpage on the County site. In 2006, more than 1.2 million visits were recorded. The website features portals for a variety of audiences, including:
 - Kidsite - information for parents and “homework help,” Internet links suggested by children’s librarians
 - Teensite
 - Seniorsite
 - English Language Learner- materials, resources and Rosetta Stone to assist individuals learning English
 - Readers Café - online portal for book discussions, recommendations, author profiles and other information
 - Biz Info – recently added feature aimed at the business community



Where the County READS . . . MEETS . . . LEARNS . . . GETS MOR

Our Self-Service Technology Includes:

- The library catalog and a number of databases available from the Internet
- Online customer access to library card account information, including online or telephone renewals
- Ability to reserve materials online through the catalog
- Ability to place interlibrary loan requests through Marina (the Maryland Interlibrary Loan Network)
- Ask Us Now interactive Internet reference service (State partnership)
- Automated sign on to public Internet access workstations
- Self check-out machines available at five branches
- “Wi-fi” Internet access in 20 libraries
- LibrarEmail electronic newsletter with valuable and timely information, such as changes in policies, upcoming new library programs and services, tips on how to utilize services more effectively, and event and program announcements.



Where the County provides life-long learning and enriching opportunities

As the figures/statistics in this report indicate, public libraries continue to be one of the most widely used services provided by the County.

Through comprehensive strategic planning, MCPL has been successful in adapting its programs, services and collections to meet the needs of a growing, diverse population, which will soon reach the one million mark.

This is a time of growth for the system, with two new, larger buildings replacing current facilities in Rockville and Germantown in FY 07. A new building is being planned to replace the current Silver Spring Library, plus two new libraries are planned for the growing communities of Clarksburg and Shady Grove. The Gaithersburg Library is next in line for a major renovation planned in FY 08.

Ongoing planning will address the changes and challenges that will inevitably arise, and Montgomery County's system of public libraries is well placed to carry out its important mission of providing life-long learning and enriching experiences for all.



Where the County READS . . . MEETS . . . LEARNS . . . GETS MOR

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS

George Leventhal, *President*
Marilyn J. Praisner, *Vice President*
Phil Andrews
Howard A. Denis
Nancy Floreen
Mike Knapp
Tom Perez
Steve Silverman
Michael L. Subin

B. Parker Hamilton, *Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries*
Lois Neuman, *Chair, Library Board*
Stephen Snapp, *President, Friends of the Library Montgomery County, MD Inc.*

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

ASPEN HILL

4407 Aspen Hill Road
Rockville, MD 20853
240-773-9410

BETHESDA

7400 Arlington Road
Bethesda, MD 20814
240-777-0970

CHEVY CHASE

8005 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
240-773-9590

DAMASCUS

9701 Main Street
Damascus, MD 20872
240-773-9444

DAVIS

6400 Democracy Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20817
240-777-0922

FAIRLAND

14910 Old Columbia Pike
Burtonsville, MD 20866
240-773-9460

GAITHERSBURG

18330 Montgomery Village Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
240-773-9490

GERMANTOWN

12900 Middlebrook Road
Germantown, MD 20874
240-777-0110

KENSINGTON PARK

4201 Knowles Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895
240-773-9515

LITTLE FALLS

5501 Massachusetts Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20816
240-773-9520

LONG BRANCH

8800 Garland Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901
240-777-0910

NOYES LIBRARY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

10237 Carroll Place
Kensington, MD 20895
301-929-5533

OLNEY

3500 Olney-Laytonsville Road
Olney, MD 20832
301-570-1232

POOLESVILLE

19633 Fisher Avenue
Poolesville, MD 20837
240-773-9550

POTOMAC

10101 Glenolden Drive
Potomac, MD 20854
240-777-0690

QUINCE ORCHARD

15831 Quince Orchard Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
240-777-0200

ROCKVILLE

21 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850
240-777-0140

SILVER SPRING

8901 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910
240-773-9420

TWINBROOK

202 Meadow Hall Drive
Rockville, MD 20851
240-777-0240

WHEATON

11701 Georgia Ave
Wheaton, MD 20902
240-777-0678

WHITE OAK

11701 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20904
301-622-2492

Montgomery County Public Libraries
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 310
Rockville, Maryland 20850
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library